

Statement of Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte  
Committee on House Administration  
Judiciary Committee Budget for the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, First Session  
Thursday, February 16, 2017

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**Chairman Harper, Ranking Member Brady and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Judiciary Committee's budget for the First Session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.**

**In this economy, all Americans are forced to tighten their belts and do more with less. I recognize that, and the Judiciary Committee has done the same. However, Ranking Member Conyers and I would like to make the case before you today that the Judiciary Committee is deserving of the maximum amount of funds that you can dedicate to it.**

**Historically and presently, the Judiciary Committee is one of the most active Committees in the House. In the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, for example, a total of 1,227**

**legislative measures introduced were referred to our Committee. The Judiciary Committee held over a hundred hearings and reported 69 bills and resolutions to the House and had jurisdictional involvement in the House passage of 88 bills and resolutions. Finally, a total of 22 bills in which the Judiciary Committee had a jurisdictional interest were signed into law by the President. Additionally, the Committee convened numerous working groups to carefully examine complicated issues like encryption and police accountability, and the Committee also visited numerous locations throughout the United States to gather information from stakeholders outside Washington, D.C. on such important issues as police accountability, aggression toward law enforcement officers, and reform of our nation's intellectual property laws. Already in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Judiciary Committee has been hard at work to meet the demands**

**of the heavy workload of the committee, including work on issues of great importance to the entire Congress, such as regulatory reform, litigation reform, prohibiting taxpayer funding of abortions, protecting the privacy of Americans' emails by updating the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, reauthorizing our nation's terrorist surveillance laws, criminal justice reform, and immigration reform, just to name a few. One only needs to pick up a newspaper and read the headlines to appreciate how busy the Judiciary Committee has been over the last two years and will continue to be this year. We also expect to continue to engage in aggressive oversight of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and other agencies within the Committee's jurisdiction.**

**Among the important issues the Committee continues to consider are ensuring that federal law**

**enforcement agencies have the necessary tools to prevent terrorist attacks; that the Constitutional rights and civil liberties of Americans are protected; that America's borders are secure and our immigration laws are enforced; and that the administration of justice is fair and efficient within both the Justice Department and federal law enforcement agencies and within our federal judiciary. In fact, the Committee expects to significantly increase its oversight of the federal judiciary, including making sure Americans have access to important information about cases, making sure Americans have sufficient access to justice, and making sure the judiciary is using its resources effectively.**

**In addition, the Committee plays an important role in strengthening our economy and putting Americans back to work. We ensure robust and fair competition under our antitrust laws, encourage innovation and promote America's global competitiveness through our**

**intellectual property laws, improve our immigration laws to attract the best and brightest from around the world<sup>1</sup> and bolster the business climate by providing relief from burdensome and excessive regulations.**

**Finally, the Committee will need to devote significant time and resources toward reauthorizing the many agencies and programs within the Committee's jurisdiction whose statutory authorizations have expired.**

**These issues are critical to the safety and economic well-being of millions of Americans.**

**Because of this, it is vital that we retain a highly qualified staff as the cornerstone of the Committee's capacity to consider complicated and often controversial legislation and policy issues that fall within its jurisdiction.**

**To attract and retain quality staff, the Committee must be able to offer compensation that is at least somewhat competitive with the private sector.**

**This is particularly challenging when a disproportionate number of committee staff are attorneys with substantial experience and public policy expertise who could command higher salaries from the private sector.**

**In addition to the personnel that are necessary to manage the demanding workload of the Judiciary Committee, there are operating funds that will be critical in enabling the Committee to properly investigate certain policy issues under its jurisdiction. For example, I believe that it is an important function of the Committee to conduct site visits and field hearings on certain complex issues, such as police accountability, immigration reform, and our ongoing review of copyright laws, where a full evaluation of the issues is**

**not possible without seeing firsthand how the current programs operate and gaining a better understanding of the successes and deficiencies of the current law.**

**While I have and will continue to do what is necessary to ensure that the Judiciary Committee is operating efficiently and effectively, I respectfully request that when allocating funds to committees, you take into account the legislative burden of the Judiciary Committee and the likelihood that it will require more resources when compared with other committees.**

**I thank you for your time and consideration and yield back the balance of my time.**

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